codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

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AGENDA ITEM NO. 4(C) **CX/FL 07/35/7-ADD.1**

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING
THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION
OTTAWA, CANADA, APRIL 30 - MAY 4, 2007

GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, LABELLING AND MARKETING OF ORGANICALLY PRODUCED FOODS: PROPOSED DRAFT AMENDMENT: ADDITION OF ETHYLENE (CL 2006/48-FL)

GOVERNMENT COMMENTS AT STEP 3

COMMENTS FROM:

BRAZIL

GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, LABELLING AND MARKETING OF ORGANICALLY PRODUCED FOODS:
PROPOSED DRAFT AMENDMENT: ADDITON OF ETHYLENE
(CL 2006/48-FL)

GOVERNMENT COMMENTS AT STEP 3

BRAZIL:

The Brazilian Delegation thanks for the opportunity to present the following comments on the Proposed Draft Amendment to the Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods: Addition of Ethylene.

Annex 1 - Principles of Organic Production

Paragraph 82 of this section can be amended as follows:

C. HANDLING, STORAGE, TRANSPORTATION, PROCESSING AND PACKAGING

82. The integrity of the organic product must be maintained throughout the processing phase. This is achieved by the use of techniques appropriate to the specifics of the ingredients with careful processing methods limiting refining and the use of additives and processing aids. Ionizing radiation should not be used on organic products for the purpose of pest control, food preservation, elimination of pathogens or sanitation.

Ethylene may be used for ripening of kiwifruit, bananas, or other tropical fruits.

Alternatively ethylene may be listed in Annex 2, Permitted Substances for the Production of Organic Foods, Table 4, Processing Aids, where some gases (carbon dioxide, nitrogen) are already listed for use with plant products.

Brazilian position:

Ethylene available on the market is a gas obtained by means of processes which depends on non-renewable hydrocarbons derived fuels (oil, natural gas and mineral coal) and this would be a reason not to approve its use on the organic food production.

Exogenous ethylene is used in small doses to initiate the ripening process in fruits, inducing an autocatalytic process of endogenous ethylene synthesis. The use of ethylene does not leave residues in fruits and does not represent risk to human health and to the environment. Furthermore, it is the only technology available and it guarantees the viability of fruits trading. Brazil agrees with the use of ethylene and its inclusion in the Annex 2, Permitted Substances for the production of Organic Foods, Table 4, Processing Aids.

Work must be done to develop methods for obtaining ethylene from renewable sources as it could assist organic producers on reducing the dependence of the property to external resources.